

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6309

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NASSAU 016

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS BF US

SUBJ: SPINEY LOBSTER TALKS -- NEXT STEPS

REF: NASSAU 2015 OF 3 DEC 74

SUMMARY: REFTEL REPORTED GCOB MINEXTAFF ADDERLEY'S COOLNESS TO IDEA OF BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON CONTINUED ACCESS BY US-BASED FISHERMEN TO SPINEY LOBSTER RESOURCE COVERED BY BAHAMIAN LEGISLATION PERMITTING DESIGNATION OF LOBSTER AS CREATURE OF SHELF. ADDERLEY WAS, HOWEVER, MORE THAN WILLING TO ENGAGE IN EXPLORATORY TALKS POOLING INFORMATION ON THE RESOURCE. FOLLOWING SUGGESTS STEPS WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN TO BEGIN SUCH TALKS, WHICH AT LEAST MIGHT ASSUAGE BAHAMIAN DESIRE TO IMPLEMENT LEGISLATION IN NEAR FUTURE, AND AT BEST MIGHT LEAD TO BILATERAL AGREEMENT CONCERNING EXPLOITATION OF RESOURCE. THIS MESSAGE ALSO INCLUDES FOR DEPARTMENT'S COMMENT A DRAFT AGENDA FOR THE INITIAL DISCUSSIONS TO BE SUBMITTED TO GCOB WITH A VIEW TO STIMULATING FIRST SESSION OF TALKS ASAP. END SUMMARY.

1. REFTEL REPORTED AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION WITH ADDERLEY ON RECENTLY PASSED BAHAMIAN SPINEY LOBSTER LEGISLATION, AT WHICH TIME AMBASSADOR ON INSTRUCTIONS BROACHED IDEA OF HOLDING BILATERAL TALKS ON THE SUBJECT, BOTH AS A MEANS OF AVOIDING POTENTIAL CONFLICT RESULTING FROM GCOB ATTEMPTS TO IMPLEMENT LAW, AND AS A MODE FOR ACHIEVING POSSIBLE JOINT PRESERVATION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE RESOURCE. ADDERLEY AT THAT TIME MADE VERY CLEAR HIS VIEW, BASED ON INSTINCT RATHER THAN FACTUAL
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DATA, THAT THE RESOURCE IS CURRENTLY BEING OVER-FISHED BY

US-BASED ELEMENTS, AND THAT TALKS DESIGNED TO CONTINUE THAT ALLEGED DECIMATION OF THE SPINEY LOBSTER WERE OF LITTLE IF ANY INTEREST TO HIM. ADDERLEY FREELY ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THE LACK OF FACTUAL UNDERPINNING FOR THE GCOBHATTITUDEBN AND DID AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO THE IDEA OF BEGINNING BILATERAL TALKS WITH AT LEAST THE INITIAL OBJECTIVE OF POOLING INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT. AMBASSADOR ACD ADDERLEY AGREED THAT THE TWO SIDES WOULD EXCHANGE DRAFT AGENDA, EMPHASIZING FACTUAL GAPS TO BE FILLED, FOR SUCH A MEETING. EMBASSY COMMENTED IN REFTEL THAT IT WAS DOUBTFUL THAT GCOB WOULD WORK SERIOUSLY ON PREPARING ITS DRAFT WITHOUT PRODDING FROM U.S., AND THEREFORE SUGGESTED THAT US TAKE INITIATIVE.

2. WHETHER ADDERLEY'S RECEPTIVITY TO IDEA OF INFORMATIONAL TALKS WAS A SOP OR NOT, IT IS CLEAR THAT HE WILL NOT BE ANXIOUS TO MOVE FURTHER INTO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING POSSIBLE SCHEMES FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND HARVESTING OF THE RESOURCE UNTIL HE IS CONVINCED BY THE RESULTS OF THOSE TALKS. IT APPEARS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT USG INTERESTS IN THE ISSUE GO BEYOND MERE INFORMATION-SHARING. GIVEN THE NARROWNESS OF OUR WEDGE IN THIS PARTICULAR DOOR, EMBASSY PROPOSES STEP BY STEP APPROACH BEGINNING WITH BILATERAL POOLING OF SCIENTIFIC AND FACTUAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SPINEY LOBSTER.

3. ADDERLEY HAS INDICATED HIS CONVICTION THAT COMPILING ACCURATE FACTUAL DATA WILL ONLY CONFIRM HIS BELIEF THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS ONE OF VAST OVER-FISHING, A STATUS QUO WHICH CANNOT BE PERMITTED TO CONTINUE. IF HE IS RIGHT, AND INFORMATION SHARED IN TALKS DOES SHOW OVER-FISHING, EMBASSY BELIEVES USG MAY HAVE EXTREME DIFFICULTY IN DENYING THAT BEST SOLUTION MAY BE A PERIOD OF MORATORIUM ON US-BASED FISHING IN AREA, OR AT LEAST EXTENSIVE CUT-BACKS. ADDERLEY IS A MAN OF STRONG CONVICTIONS, AND WILL EXAMINE FACTUAL EVIDENCE PRESENTED CLOSELY, INDEED SUSPICIOUSLY IF IT IS BASED ON INDUSTRY SOURCES, BUT EMBASSY BELIEVES HE WOULD ACCEPT HONEST FACTUAL DATA EVEN IF IT INDICATES RESOURCE IS NOT BEING DEPLETED OR IS BEING UNDERUTILIZED. AT SAME TIME, US SHOULD FOR ITS PART UNDERSTAND AND BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCES OF DATA INDICATING A CONTRARY CONCLUSION, WHICH COULD WELL LEAD TO A HIGHLY RESTRICTIVE GCOB ATTITUDE TOWARD CONTINUED US-BASED EXPLOITATION. CONFIDENTIAL

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TION. THIS IS A GAMBLE EMBASSY BELIEVES HASTO BE TAKEN.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT GCOB WILL HAVE LITTLE ACCURATE FACTUAL INFORMATION OF ITS OWN TO OFFER IN PROPOSED TALKS. INITIATIVE FOR DEVELOPING AND PRESENTING DATA WILL REMAIN ALMOST ENTIRELY ON US SIDE, AT LEAST DURING INITIAL STAGES. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT VERY IMPORTANT THAT USG SEIZE THIS INITIATIVE AND PURSUE IT. DOMESTIC PRESSURES ON GCOB TO IMPLEMENT

SPINEY LOBSTER LEGISLATION REMAIN. PRESSURES MAY ABATE SOME-
WHAT AS BAHAMIAN SEASON CLOSES, ASSUMING US-BASED FISHERMEN
DO NOT FLAGRANTLY VIOLATE CLOSURE. WHEN 1975 SEASON OPENS IN
LATE SUMMER, HOWEVER, GOCB WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY IMPLEMENT
ITS LAW UNLESS SUBSTANTIAL BILATERAL PROGRESS TOWARD AN
ACCOMMODATION OF INTERESTS IS PERCEIVED. IN EMBASSY VIEW,
THIS ARGUES FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION WITHIN USG TO ACCUMULATE
PERSUASIVE FACTUAL DATA FOR PRESENTATION TO GOCB AT BEGINNING
OF FEBRUARY. GOCB MAY, THROUGH BUREAUCRATIC INEFFICIENCY OR
MORE DELIBERATELY, DRAG ITS FEET ON THESE TALKS, BUT USG
SHOULD NOT.
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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6310

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NASSAU 016

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5. EMBASSY'S PROPOSED DRAFT AGENDA FOLLOWS. QUOTE:

DRAFT AGENDA FOR BILATERAL EXPLORATORY TALKS ON SPINEY
LOBSTER FISHERY

THE PURPOSE OF THESE TALKS IS TO EXPLORE MUTUALLY, EMPHASIZING
POINTS AT WHICH FURTHER FACTUAL DATA ARE NECESSARY, THE NATURE
OF THE RESOURCE INVOLVED, THE NATURE OF CURRENT HARVESTING OF
IT, AND THE POTENTIAL OF BOTH.

A. NATURE OF THE RESOURCE: 1. LOCATION; 2. HABITS, A) MATING,
B) SPAWNING, C) MOVEMENTS; 3. SIZE; 4. TRENDS.

B. NATURE OF THE FISHERY: 1. BAHAMIAN, A) SEASONS, B) ORGANI-
ZATION, C) EQUIPMENT UTILIZED AND FISHING METHODS, D) AREA
OF OPERATION, E) ECONOMIC FACTORS; 2. U.S. (SAME AS ABOVE).

C. POTENTIAL OF RESOURCE AND FISHERY: 1. IN LIGHT OF CONCLUSIONS FOUND IN A AND B ABOVE, MEASURES TO ASSURE THE VIABILITY OF THE RESOURCE; 2. IN LIGHT OF SAME CONCLUSIONS, MEASURES TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM SUSTAINABLE YIELD.

D. DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE AND FISHERY: 1. LONG-TERM CONSERVATION MEASURES; 2. LONG-TERM MEASURES TO DEVELOP FISHERY.
END QUOTE

6. DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS REQUESTED ASAP. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT DRAFT AGENDA TO GCOB MID-JANUARY AND PROPOSE FEB-CONFIDENTIAL

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FEBRUARY 5 AS DATE FOR BEGINNING OF EXPLORATORY TALKS, BUT EMBASSY'S DESIRE TO MOVE EXPEDITIOUSLY MAY HAVE TO BE TEMPERED BY AVAILABILITY OF DATA TO USG. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S ESTIMATE OF HOW LONG IT WILL TAKE TO ACCUMULATE AT LEAST ROUGH DATA, WHICH EMBASSY SKED PREVIOUSLY BE COMPLIED, IN FORM WHICH COULD BE USED IN EXPLORATORY TALKS WITH GCOB. GROENEWEG

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